the Lions' Pride

Of Saint Leo University

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2003 VOLUME XXXVII NO. 7 SINCE 1965

Today

Welcome to SLU Freshman

Freshman Orientation was a positive experience for most of the over 300 freshman and parents who attended. The planned activites offered a taste of college life. Page 3

New SGU Executive Board

Last spring's elections have brought new officers into the Student Government Union. Read on to find out about their plans for the year. Page 5

Admissions Strikes Back

The new admissions website, slu4u.net, recently launched. The site will bring Saint Leo even closer to prospective student around the country. Page 5

Test Prep Courses A Must for Grads

Prep courses for tests like the GRE and LSAT have never been more popular. Although expensive, they prove their worth by raising scores. Page 7

Roommate Trouble? Read On

If you've ever had trouble with a roommate, read these handy tips on how to ensure a room change. Page 8

Welcome to Christmas Card Lane.

Photograph courtesy of Curtis Robinson

Holiday happenings on campus

Saint Leo University has been alive with holiday spirit.

BY NATASHA FREDERICKS
Editor for The Lions' Pride

SAINT LEO - At 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday, December 2, several hundred people gathered in the Saint Leo Abby Church to hear The Florida Orchestra Brass Quintet. The somber music lulled the audience, forcing even the most inattentive students to sit still and listen. With bright lights and precise timing, the quintet drew the crowd's attention. The Quintet began the concert with "Fanfare from 'La Peri," but soon worked their way into more traditional Christmas songs like, "The Little Drummer Boy" and "Joy to the World."

The Saint Leo student body gathered with the surrounding community making history with the largest gathering of any previous Saint Leo Christmas concert in four years, according to Dr. June Hammond, the coordinator for music at Saint Leo University. As emotionally moving as the quintet was, they were far from the end of the night's festivities. Directly following the concert, the audience eagerly filed out of the Abbey, picked up candles, and sang Christmas carols as they began their procession to the Saint Leo Christmas tree.

Their voices rang out heavenly songs that seemed to be led by the divine. Soon everyone gathered around in the dark, and each person offered up her single candle as light for others. Surrounded in darkness and full of excitement, people gathered side by side. As the community surrounded the tree, Father Michael led the Christmas Tree Blessing. Doe-eyed children stared up in wonder while their parents looked down at them lovingly. Students gathered excitedly, and everyone anticipated the inevitable. Suddenly, as though by magic, a light flashed. Some people gasped, and the tree was aglow in a bright indigo blue. The community was dumbstruck for a moment.

— HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS PAGE 4

A new perspective on Christmas: The Winter Solstice

BY FRANCINE ROSARIO
Staff Writer for The Lions' Pride

SAINT LEO - The tradition of Christmas comes from the birth of Jesus Christ thousands of years ago. However, the word Christmas comes from the Old English term Christ' Mass. The Roman Catholics introduced the celebration, Christ Mass, to the world several centuries after the days of the apostles.

However, since December has the shortest daylight of the year, the ancient Romans called it the End of Darkness, or the Winter Solstice, which usually occurred December 21. The people celebrated the winter Solstice to distract themselves from the long, arduous, depressing nights of the winter. That same celebration is now called Christmas.

It was a holiday of optimism, a holiday where the days got longer and warmer, a holiday of fertility and rebirth, and the lengthening sun allowed farmers to eventually

— CHRISTMAS PAGE 5

Opinions

EDITORIAL

Bush's Iraq trip not PR move

BY STAFF WRITER
The Lantern (Ohio State U.)

(U-WIRE) COLUMBUS, Ohio - President Bush made a surprise visit to see the troops in Iraq on Thanksgiving Day. The top secret visit made Bush the first ever U.S. president to visit Iraq.

Critics are calling the visit a pre-election public relations stunt. Claims are being made that the visit to Iraq in which the president gave a speech and served food to the troops was simply a campaign stop for the presidential election which is less than 12 months away.

The visit might have aided in Bush's re-election campaign, but people need to look at the visit as more than a PR move. Bush said to the soldiers, "We thank you for your service, we're proud of you and America stands solidly behind you." The visit and the remarks to soldiers from the president will help aid the morale of the troops in Iraq.

People who look at the visit as a PR stunt have pre-conceived notions that anything President Bush does to try to be thoughtful or caring is simply a campaign strategy. He made the trip for reasons much more important than his re-election in 2004.

Thanksgiving is a day Americans are accustomed to spending with family. The troops in Iraq were not afforded such a luxury. Instead they must depend on each other amid growing resistance in Iraq. The combination of these two factors called for a morale booster, which the president provided.

On Air Force One on the way home from Iraq, Bush told reporters why he made the visit and how he felt about visiting the troops. "It's got to be a lonely moment for them," Bush said. "I thought it was important to send the message that we care for them and we support them strongly, that we erase any doubts in their minds as to whether or not the people stand with them ... Having seen the reaction of those troops, you know it was the right thing to do."

The American media and the American people are entitled to their own opinion on the president's visit to Iraq and his commentary about the visit. But even those against the war in Iraq should realize this was a good thing to do for the troops in Iraq.

Surprise visit - publicity stunt or show of support?

BY ALEXANDRIA CRONIN
Staff Writer for The Lions' Pride

SAINT LEO - The arrival of President Bush uplifted the troop's spirits and surprised them. Never did they think that the Head of State would show up at the First Armored Division and 82nd Airborne base and serve them Thanksgiving dinner. No one in the U.S. would have believed it either. No one knew, except for his immediate family and a few select people.

However, although many were deceived by Bush's surprise arrival at the small base in Iraq, this writer saw it for what it was, a publicity stunt. If President Bush was actually going to show his support for the troops, he wouldn't have gone at night, and he wouldn't have brought his own press. As everyone knows, elections are next fall and Bush's support in the U.S. has been slowly depleting. Bush is running for his second election and needs all the support he can get. Being a politician, I am sure that this has not escaped him. Making sure that the Iraqi press was there, he tried to rally the troops and get more votes.

It's a know fact that many of the U.S. soldiers in Iraq do not want to be there anymore. What better way to get back the support of the troops then to show up at a small base and serve them Thanksgiving dinner.

The only question that I am wondering is, does he care more for the troops or for his election?

Trips to Iraq were noble and political

BY STAFF WRITER
Minnesota Daily (U. Minnesota)

(U-WIRE) MINNEAPOLIS - President George W. Bush and Sens. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., and Jack Reed, D-R.I., all made visits to Iraq last week. The trips were quick, in part because of safety risks, including a difficult "corkscrew" landing by an unlit Air Force One. The purpose of both visits was to visit the troops, who were away from their families during Thanksgiving weekend. While these visits could have included more time gathering first-hand information, the leaders deserve credit for choosing to skip family gathering time to thank the soldiers who had to miss theirs.

News coverage focused on the troops, although the media noted that Clinton took time to discuss women's rights in Iraq.

The White House and Congress have to solve a complex and problematic situation in Iraq. As such, it's truly unfortunate the leaders did not take time to see more, although safety likely played a part in this. Still, in the words of one Iraqi, "(They) could have gone to the streets to feel what is happening. It's better than people telling (them) what is happening."

Campaign ads will no doubt feature all the photo opportunities with soldiers and turkey. Bush faces a tough re-election, and the trip again raised questions about Clinton's political ambitions. We have no doubt that political gain motivated the trips at some level. This can be said, however, of nearly all public appearances by politicians. In the end, a good deed is a good deed, despite a possible mix of motivations, and thanking soldiers qualifies.

Whatever one thinks about Iraq policy, soldiers deserve gratitude from those they serve. Choosing to put another's safety ahead of your own is not normal human behavior. For a soldier, at the most basic level, it is a job. In Iraq, where danger and poor living conditions are a way of life, many have seen that job's duration extended.

The senators and our president took the time and safety risk to thank our military members. While not a solution to the problems at hand, it was the right thing to do.

Lions' Pride Staff

Staff:
Tasha Fredericks (editor)
Rachel Blackwood
Michelle Bonner
Alexandria Cronin
Karen Christie
Julia Carroll (photographer)
Sarah Froelich
September Harrison
Bryan McCabe
Jennifer Reilley
Francine Rosario
Advisors:
Dr. Mark Edmonds
Miss Sarah Hard
Mrs. Valerie Kasper

Write here

The Lions' Pride newsroom is located in portable #4, which is on the west side of St. Edward's Hall. Our phone number is (352) 588-8195.

Send letters to the editor to lions.pride@saintleo.edu

Letters to the editor must be submitted with student's name, year, and major. Faculty and staff members must include rank and department.

Please include a phone number (not for publication) so we can verify authorship. All letters are subject to editing.

The Lions' Pride reserves the right not to publish any letter or column.

Happy hearts help habitat

The community is helped when cans are recycled.

BY MICHELLE BONNER & KAREN CHRISTIE
Staff Writers for The Lions' Pride

SAINT LEO - Did you know that it takes 12,600 pounds of cans to build one house?

At Saint Leo University, students know how important it is to try to help others in anyway they can. One way to help is to recycle. The Samaritans have teamed up with Denny Mihalinec, the founder of the East Pasco Habitat for Humanity recycling program, to recycle cans in order to help those less fortunate. The cans that are collected help to build a home for those who cannot afford one. These houses are not built from the cans themselves, but the money collected from recycling these cans helps to buy the materials that are needed to build these houses, which are small and have only one bathroom. They have no garage or carport, but the important thing is that they provide a place for people to live.

"Building houses one can at a time," stated Tamara Sargent and Adela Hernandez as they related why Habitat for Humanity is a worthwhile cause.

This program is now campus wide, and there have been 26 bins dispersed all over campus to collect aluminum cans. The bins are located in all of the residence halls, in the SAC, Saint Edward Hall, Saint Francis, and in the McDonald Center. These bins are only for the collection of aluminum cans. The Samaritans and the committee in charge of collecting these cans ask that students, faculty, and staff not put anything other than cans in these bins. The committee will collect these cans on the third of every month and tally how many were collected.

Students believe the program is worthwhile.

"Building houses one can at a time," stated Tamara Sargent and Adela Hernandez.

This program was founded on April 15 of this year, and there are already 530 habitat affiliates participating with 2200 recycling centers available. There is one recycling center in the Zephyrhills area, and a bunch of local businesses in Dade City, San Antonio, Zephyrhills, and Wesley Chapel are also recycling.

"As of October 22, we have collected 1,000 pounds of cans," Mihalinec stated when he was asked to give an estimate.

In order to build a house, 12,600 pounds of cans must be collected. It will help the community if people who purchase canned sodas will remember to recycle them. The more cans recycled, the closer Habitat for Humanity is to helping people in need throughout the community. There are three locations on campus that vend cans: DeChantal Hall, Saint Edward Hall, and Crawford Hall. Just think of all the people in the area who need a place to live, and remember to recycle. One can will bring Habitat for Humanity one-step closer to making a difference.

Photograph courtesy of Julia Carroll
There are 26 of these bins are placed throughout campus for aluminum can collection.

Welcome to Saint Leo's Christmas Card Lane

Native Americans do not want assimilated into conventional American society

BY NATASHA FREDERICKS
Editor for The Lions' Pride

SAINT LEO - It is the 1770s, a two-year-old, Native American boy lies on the ground, wrapped in a blue blanket. His mother pulls it back to reveal her son's naked body, which is covered in boils, especially on his hands and feet. He can't stand or talk, but he howls with pain. A Native American physician backs away in horror. He says he can smell death. He does not know what is wrong with the boy. The physician doesn't know the small child has smallpox or that this virus is contagious because Native Americans have never been exposed to this type of disease.

This is not quite the typical Thanksgiving story, but such events reduced the numbers of Native Americans for three centuries after the arrival of British immigrants to this country.

According to Mary Pierpoint in *Bioterrorism New to Native Americans?* Native Americans were besieged by disease due to contact with Europeans. She said sometimes the spread of the disease was unintentional; however, she found that smallpox was deliberately sent to Native Americans as a military strategy "...to rid Europeans of what they considered pests."

Pierpoint found some evidence of this military strategy in a postscript of a letter from Amherst, a commanding general for the British, to Bouquet, a British Colonel, which read, "Could it not be contrived to send the smallpox among those disaffected tribes of Indians? We must on this occasion use every stratagem in our power to reduce them..."

According to Bill Jones, author of *A Merged History of Canada and the United States*, "... we can assume that 90 percent of the original American Indian population of North America died of smallpox alone."

Throughout the following centuries the United States government continually subjected Native Americans to such events as the "Indian Removal Act" of 1830, which led to the "Trial of Tears," which led to the forced removal of Native Americans from their homes on to reservations. The United States government also attempted to "civilize" Native American people in the 1890s, by sending their children to boarding schools, making them act and dress like Euro-Americans, and forbidding them to speak their native tongues. Unfortunately, Native Americans are still being oppressed.

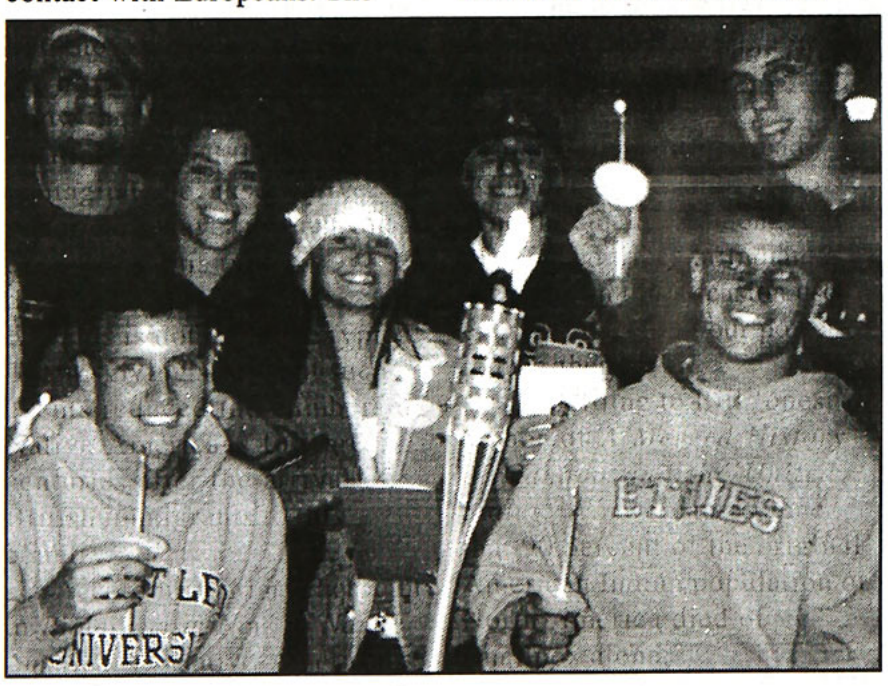
> ***"Today, Native Americans are the poorest of all the United States' minorities," said Maribeth Durst. "They only have a 44 year life span."***

"Today, Native Americans are the poorest of all the United States' minorities. They only have a 44 year life span, and one out of three Native Americans will be in jail in his or her life time," said Dr. Maribeth Durst, the dean of the School of Education and Social Sciences at Saint Leo University.

"There are a little over 200 reservations and over 400 tribes in the United States, and Native Americans are still being oppressed in our modern society," Durst said.

Durst explained that Native Americans have lost not only their land, but also their dignity. Native Americans are treated as second-class citizens and have an increasingly high unemployment rate.

Present day Native Americans maintain that as a whole, they do not want to be assimilated into conventional American society. They wish to govern themselves and redevelop their culture independent of the current American society. After being subjugated, Native Americans concluded that they would like to be separated from their American counterparts. Durst spoke about the plight of Native Americans during the "Naked Truth Series," which was sponsored by the School of Education and Social Sciences, the SA Values Committee, and the SA Diversity Committee.



Photographs courtesy of Natasha Fredericks

After the brass quintet played, people filed out of the Abbey, picked up candles, and sang carols as they walked to the lighting of the tree.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS CON'T —

After the oohs and aahhs, people slowly began to dissipate. They found themselves at a refreshment table piled high with sugar cookies and steaming hot chocolate. A feeling of warmth floated in the air as people conversed softly. Over in the corner, a little girl stood staring at the tree from behind a miniature church made of Christmas lights. She seemed to be a symbol of innocence and the Christmas spirit.

After the refreshments, the Saint Leo community commented on the concert.

"It was a great experience for us students," said Joe Stubbs, a Saint Leo sophomore. "We don't look for music like this, but it's important that we get exposed to it."

Others spoke of Christmas and the tree lighting. Father Michael explained some on the symbolism behind the evergreen tree.

"The evergreen tree is like God: ever green, ever lasting. The tree reminds us of God's everlasting love for us," said Father Michael.

The event was co-sponsored by Student Affairs and The School of Arts and Sciences.

Recording, film execs want colleges to charge for downloaded music

BY MICHAEL GLUSKIN
The Diamondback (U. Maryland)

(U-WIRE) COLLEGE PARK, Md. — If the recording and film industries get their way, university students across the country will soon be paying for downloaded music — even if they don't use the Internet.

An independent group of film and music industry executives and national higher education leaders has been quietly crafting a pilot program that would make universities add a mandatory file-sharing fee to students' room and board payments.

The program, the brainchild of the recently formed independent Joint Committee of the Higher Education and Entertainment Communities, is still in its infancy. Only a few universities have agreed to join the program, but its creators are giving stiff warnings to those who haven't complied, including students at the University of Maryland.

"No one would be required to participate, but those who don't, their students run the risk of having lawsuits filed against them and getting put in prison ... Music thefts are in the billions of dollars, and Congress is taking it very seriously," said Steve MacCarthy, vice president of University Relations at Penn State University.

U. Maryland officials here have shown little interest in the program. They have looked at several different programs, including the committee's pilot program, but have yet to settle on specifics, said Amy Ginther, coordinator of Project NEThics in the Office of Information Technology.

Penn State's President Graham Spanier, co-chair of the new committee, encouraged this university to participate in the spring pilot program last month in a letter sent to university President Dan Mote.

"As you no doubt know, the recording industry is stepping up its enforcement of copyright, and the legal liability of students engaged in unauthorized P2P [peer to peer] file sharing ... will increase significantly," Spanier wrote in the letter.

The pilot program, which includes Penn State and the University of Rochester, pairs universities with an online music service interested in developing file sharing technology that could be used on a college campus.

In the letter to Mote, Spanier said the committee would act as a "marriage broker" between universities and interested music services.

If the pilot program is successful, a permanent system may be established on certain college campuses.

"One idea is a program to charge students a fee folded into their regular semester bills which would offset copyright royalties," Penn State spokesman Tysen Kendig said.

Any fees would be "nominal," MacCarthy said. He said the fee would be added to a student's room-and-board charge, and that Penn State is close to reaching an agreement with a music provider to start a pilot program.

The university should keep its priorities focused on the state budget crisis — not file sharing, said Student Government Association President Tim Daly.

"I wouldn't expect this university to be too excited about the program because the increases in mandatory fees and tuition are significant problems," he said.

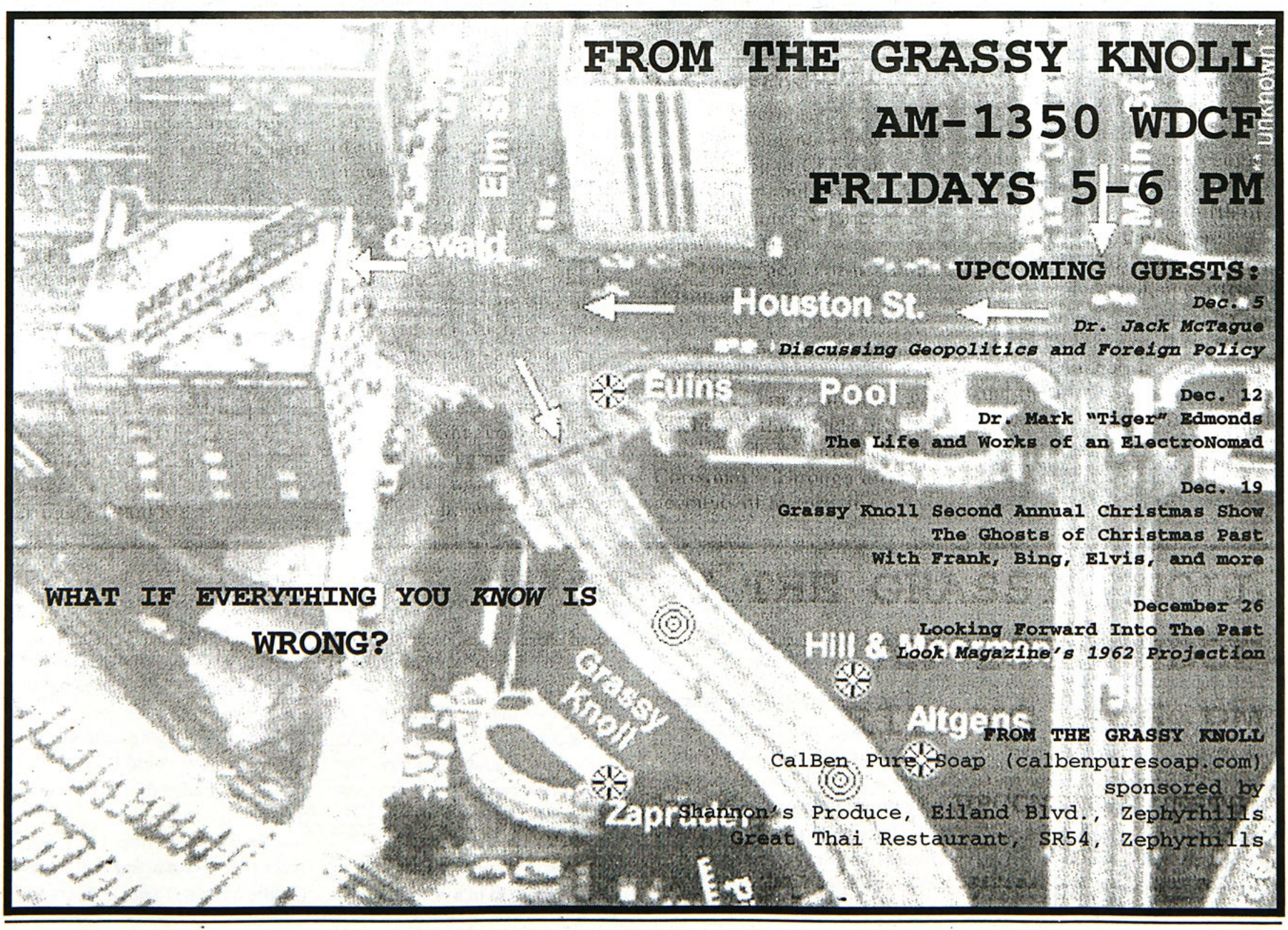
CHRISTMAS CON'T

plant their crops.

Most students know where the tradition of Christmas comes from, but few realize that the Winter Solstice was celebrated first.

"I have heard of it," said freshman Nicole Brown, "There is a summer solstice also, but I don't know exactly what it is."

If the Winter Solstice was celebrated thousands of years ago, why do we now celebrate Christmas? Through different accounts of history, it eventually was turned into a holiday where Catholics celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ. Although many people acknowledge that December 25 was not the actual birth of Jesus, it is the day where Christian families get together to celebrate, exchange gifts, and become one, like Mary and Joseph did the day their son was welcomed into the world and the three Wise Men brought gifts to the family.

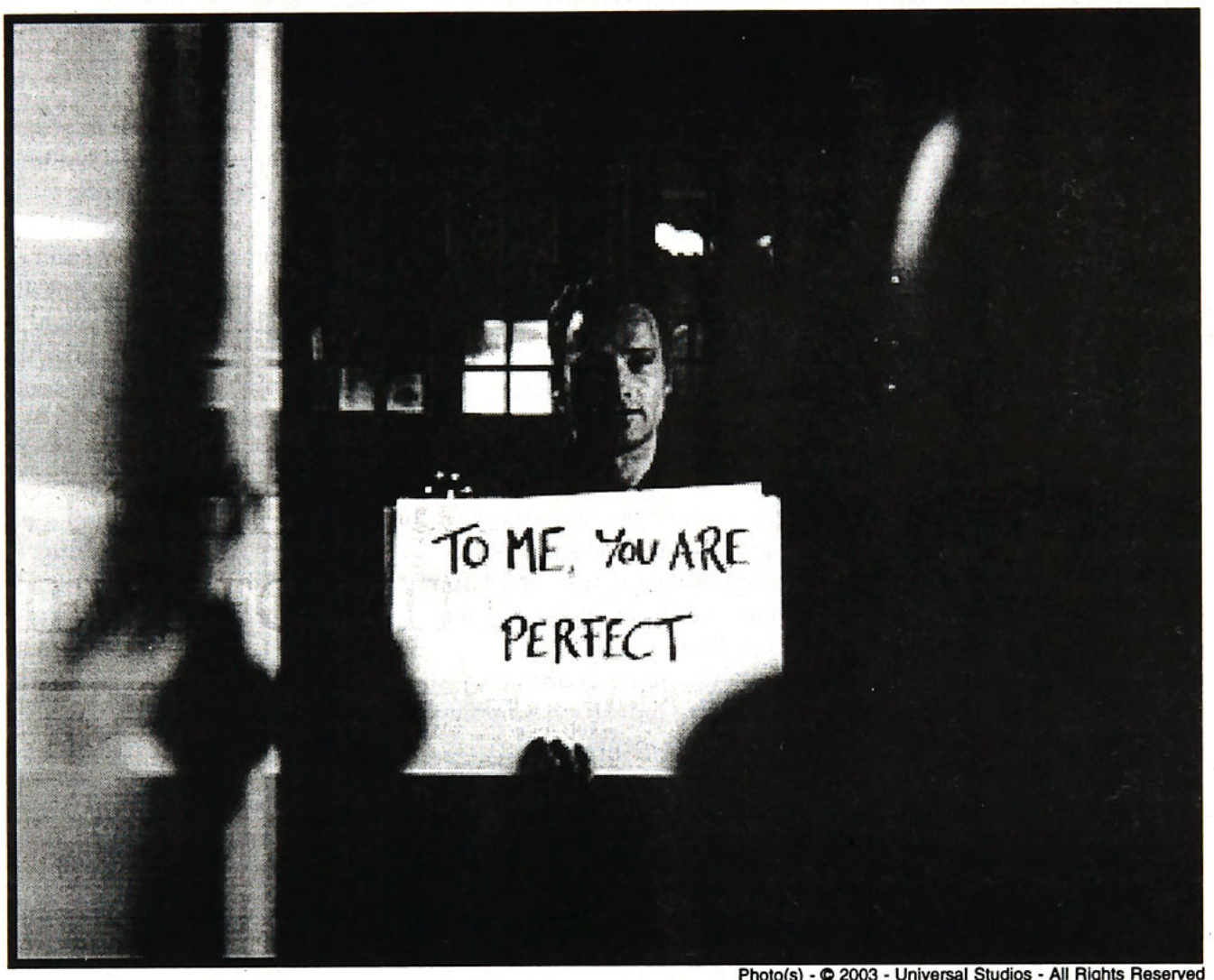


Arts & Entertainment

MOVIE REVIEWS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

"Love Actually"

BY JENNIFER REILLY
Staff Writer for The Lions' Pride



Photo(s) - © 2003 - Universal Studios - All Rights Reserved

Andrew Lincoln in "Love Actually"

"All you need is love," "Love is a many splendor thing," and "Unchained Melody"- all songs that emphasize the crazy effects of the wonderful feeling known as love. "Love Actually" follows the separate stories of the love people feel during the Christmas season. Within the opening scene, Hugh Grant expresses the joy he feels when he visits the arrival gates at airports. When people run to each other with open arms and tears of joy fall, the sadness and the harsh realities of the world melt and the realization is "love actually is all around." He uses a reference to September 11 within the first few minutes, which may throw some people off, but the statement is so clear and beautiful it only reinforces the strength of love.

The love between father and son, husband and wife, boyfriend and girlfriend, and the love that binds the strongest friendships is expressed throughout the film. All the characters run into individual obstacles as they seek to win the hearts of the people they love. All of the interwoven stories are pulled together by small relations. The audience may find it difficult at some points to understand all of the different connections. David (Hugh Grant), as Britain's new prime minister, falls in love with his secretary Natalie (Martine McCutcheon). In the meantime, his brother in law, Harry, (Alan Rickman) contemplates having an affair with his own secretary, Mia (Heike Makatsch). His sister, Karen (Emma Thompson), while dealing with the downfall of her marriage, helps her friend, Daniel (Liam Nisson), cope with the death of his wife and the struggles and joys of raising his stepson (Thomas Sangster). Sam, the stepson, has become smitten with a girl at school and at the young age of 11 claims, "The truth is I'm in love and there's nothing I can do about it, and it just keeps getting worse."

This may seem like too many separate vignettes, but there are more. The unrequited love of Mark (Andrew Lincoln) for Juliet (Keira Knightly) rivals the story of Sam and his young love in the category of adorableness. The plot deepens even further with the unspoken love Sarah (Laura Linney) feels for a coworker. Her shyness keeps her from asking him out, and when she finally gets him alone, her responsibility to care for her disabled brother keeps her from getting what she's always dreamed of.

"Love Actually" displays the difficulties of love. Jaime (Colin Firth) and Aurelia (Lucia Moniz) must overcome a language barrier. Judy and John (Joanna Page and Martin Freeman) must overcome the obstacles that come with their line of work. Billy Mack (Bill Nighy) seems to be an out-of-date, struggling rock star that reinforces a sense of reality. With his humor and sarcasm, he ties the different stories together with his holiday hit, "Christmas is all Around Us." When he finally realizes he loves his manager, we see the strength of friendship.

Hugh Grant's character plays a strong role in the movie even though his lines do not outnumber most. As the Prime Minister of Britain, subtle political messages are portrayed throughout the movie. These subtle messages become more obvious when Billy Bob Thorton enters as the President of the United States. The plot now starts to be a display of political hostilities and a demonstration of Hollywood's view on today's political parties. Traditionally, Hollywood is liberal and with all the British influence, America was portrayed as not a friend but a bully. Depending on your political preference, this factor may discourage you from seeing "Love Actually," but I would recommend it to anyone who can keep an open mind and look past it.

This British comedy, with a rating of R due to sexuality, nudity, and language, is not recommended for the whole family, but for the average college student it is wonderful. "Love Actually" was written and directed by Richard Curtis, who also directed "Four Weddings and A Funeral," "Notting Hill," and "Bridget Jone's Diary." With the theme of finding love at Christmas, this movie is sure to make you smile. Some critics believe it may get confusing with all the different vignettes, but I believe it was well written so that the stories are clear and understandable. Music throughout the movie seems to tie scenes together well and add to the Christmas spirit.

As "Love Actually" displays the love between family and friends, it succeeds in making you feel all warm and fuzzy inside. It is simple in theme, but it is possible to explore the depths of all the different relationships. The idea of love being everywhere is expressed by Hugh Grant in the opening scene, "Love is everywhere. When the planes hit the twin towers, I'm sure none of the phone calls made were about hate," and that idea is continued throughout the entire film.

"The Haunted Mansion not much of a thrill ride"

BY JENNIFER MARCOULLIER
Massachusetts Daily Collegian
(U Massachusetts-Amherst)

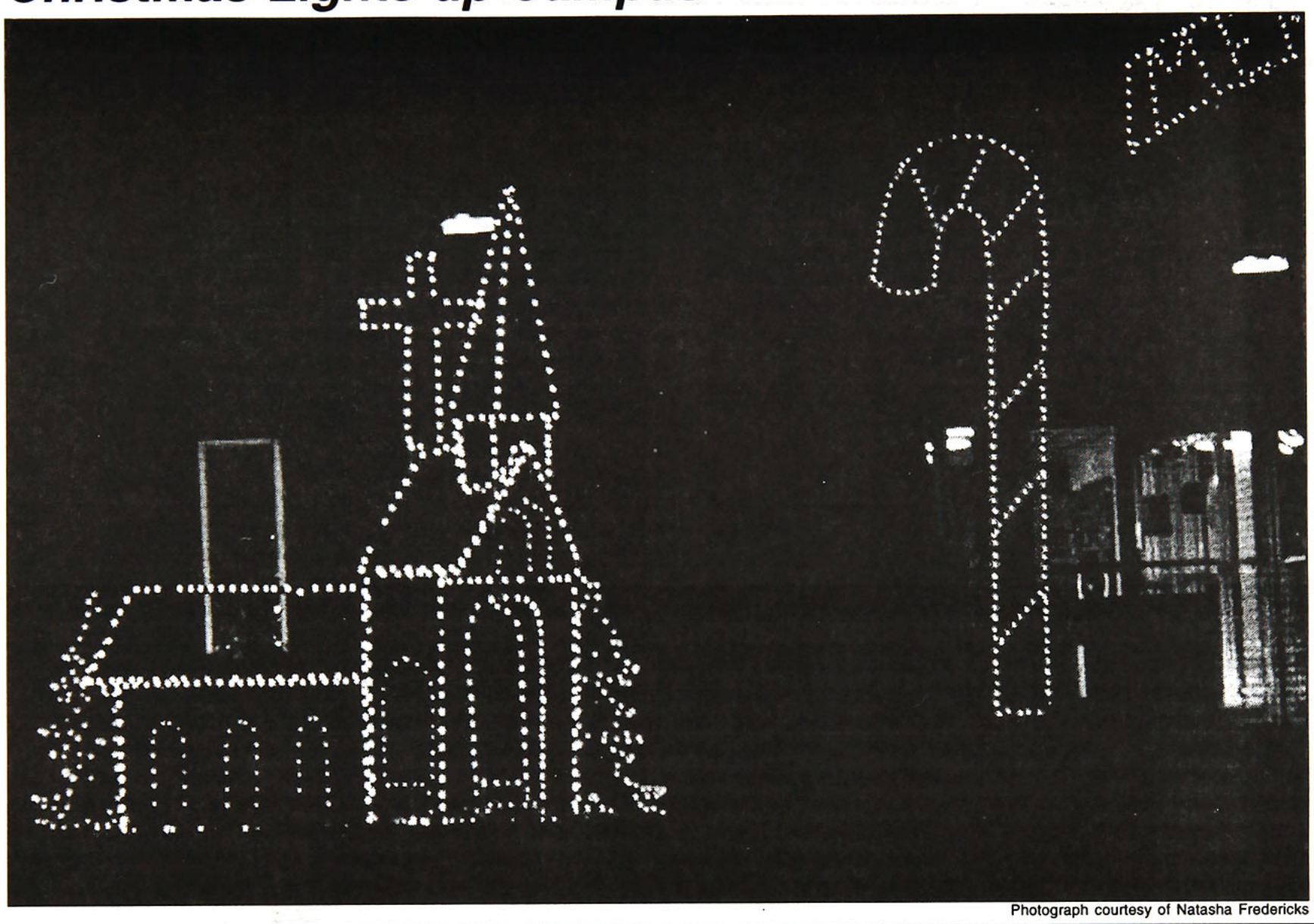
(U-WIRE) AMHERST, Mass. - In "The Haunted Mansion," Disney does what it does best: Create a perfect fairy tale world that's entertaining to the kids, not offensive to the parents, and sprinkle it with wholesome lessons on life.

"Mansion" is Disney's second movie this year based on a theme-park ride at Walt Disney World. But while the blockbuster "Pirates of the Caribbean" had a bite and brilliance — thanks to Johnny Depp's performance — "Mansion" lacks any such adult-level fare. The special effects are dazzling but most of the jokes fall flat.

The movie begins with a flashback to a gorgeous masquerade ball in a not-yet-haunted Louisiana mansion. It's a tale of star-crossed lovers. A woman apparently commits suicide and her lover arrives too late to stop her. Overcome by his own grief, he kills himself. We see him briefly swinging from the rafters in what could be a disturbing image for the film's younger viewers.

Back in the present day, we meet real estate agent Jim Evers (Eddie Murphy) who appears to

Christmas Lights up Campus



Photograph courtesy of Natasha Fredericks

have been cloned from the stereotype of a used car salesman. Vintage Murphy fans will inevitably recall his old stand-up routine about how ridiculous it is that no one in horror movies ever leaves an obviously haunted house.

Pretending to be a potential buyer of a spooky home, he mimes how wonderful the place is until the ghosts make themselves known. "Too bad we can't stay, baby!" he says and ushers his family from the house.
Ironically in this movie, Murphy's character is the classic bumbling father who's the last to figure out the house is haunted. His performance in "Mansion" is delivered in voices that belonged to funny bits from his stand-up past but that have little comic value with the material he's given here.

During the film's overly long set-up, we're clued in to what the characters — and hence the audience — will need to learn about life before the credits roll. Jim Evers is the father who cannot help but chat up potential clients rather than get to an anniversary dinner with his wife, Sara (Marsha Thomason). Their 10-year-old son, Michael (played wonderfully by Marc John Jefferies, who gets most of the laughs), is afraid of spiders and Dad tries to use this phobia to teach Michael to overcome his fears in life. You know there's a character-building moment involving spiders coming up in the near future.

Daughter Megan (Aree Davis) serves mainly to remind Dad of how out-of-whack his priorities are, but does get to help save the day.

Just before the family is to leave for a weekend at the lake, Sara — one-half of the Evers and Evers real estate team — is invited to a mysterious old mansion the owner has suddenly decided to sell. With Dad's promise that this will "just take 20 minutes," the family stops at the house en route to the lake. The mansion itself is a crumbling gothic masterpiece that — this being Disney — looks exactly as one imagines a haunted mansion should look.

Fitting right in with the scenery are the zombie-like butler (Terence Stamp), the ghoulish servants (Wallace Shawn and Dina Spybey), a talking gypsy head in a crystal ball (Jennifer Tilly) and the darkly magnetic Master Gracey (Nathaniel Parker) who seems to have taken way too much of an interest in Mom.
The film tiptoes around the theme of the interracial affair in Gracey's past, which is a shame because that is one of the more compelling aspects to the story.

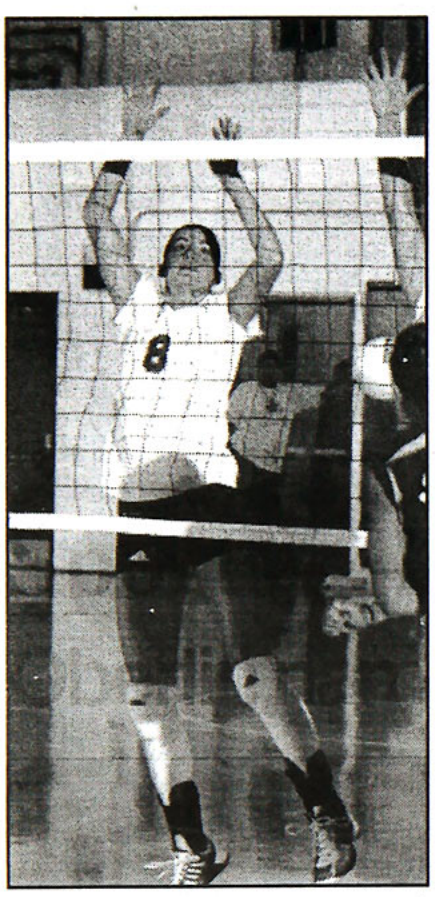
Instead, "Mansion" keeps to its lighthearted script. A sudden storm kicks up (complete with a scary music crescendo) and the Evers family must spend the night. They're soon separated from Dad, wandering secret passages, Mom being romanced by Master Gracey, and the kids chasing ghosts. But the family has to pull together to solve the mystery of the mansion's curse and save one of its members from certain doom. Along the way we're treated to the technical virtuosity of Disney's special effects. The mansion, the ghosts and the otherworldly action are all beautifully done and almost make up for the skeletal plot.
Several of the scenes may give the under-10 crowd nightmares, but the "gotcha" moments didn't get much audience reaction.
And that's the basic problem with "Mansion." There's nothing to amuse or startle the adult members of the audience. It sticks to a simplistic story and relies on the special effects to carry it.
While this will be one of the better movies you'll see with a child, without one in tow you're better off looking elsewhere for entertainment.

Photo(s) - © 2003 - Walt Disney Pictures - All Rights Reserved

Eddie Murphy stars in "The Haunted Mansion"

Sports

Oberlin named to SSC All-Freshmen volleyball team



Photographs courtesy of SLU Athletic Department

SAINT LEO - Freshman middle hitter Erin Oberlin of Saint Leo University was named to the Sunshine State Conference All-Freshman volleyball team for the 2003 season. The Naples, Fl resident was the lone Saint Leo player honored on either the All-Conference team or the All-Freshman team.

Oberlin played in 108 games in her first season of collegiate competition and averaged 2.06 kills and had a .217 attack percentage. She averaged 0.72 digs and 0.72 blocks. Her 44 service aces led the team. Saint Leo finished the year with an 11-19 record overall and was 2-12 in the conference.

Baseball team's golf tournament a success

Photographs courtesy of SLU Athletic Department

SAINT LEO - The 2003 Saint Leo University baseball team's golf tournament on November 15 was a success with 76 players on hand at Plantation Palms in Land O'Lakes, FL.

"I can't thank those who participated and helped sponsor the event enough," said Saint Leo Coach Ricky Ware.

Ware praised the efforts of former Saint Leo baseball player Dave Garcia (See above.) for his efforts in gaining sponsors and players for the 18-hole event. Garcia is a 1996 graduate, who was inducted into the Saint Leo Athletic Hall-of-Fame in the 2002 Class.

The winning team in the scramble format included Beth Bauer, Billy Dent, Aaron Heiser, and Ken Faircloth. (See right.)